

Questions and Answers for Industry

The following information provides you with answers to frequently asked questions and should be used only as a guide and not considered to be a legal authority.

Who enforces the laws and regulations regarding petroleum products quality, advertising and labeling?

The Division of Measurement Standards and each County Office of Weights and Measures are jointly responsible for the enforcement of weights and measures laws and regulations in California.

How are the specifications for gasoline, diesel fuel, motor oil, gear oil, automatic transmission fluid, and engine coolants developed?

The State of California adopts by reference ASTM International and SAE International specifications for gasoline, diesel fuel, motor oil, gear oil, and engine coolants. Automatic transmission fluid standards are adopted from the automobile manufacturers' specifications.

How does the Petroleum Products Program test gasoline and diesel fuel to determine if they meet the quality specifications?

Samples received in the laboratory are tested using standardized procedures developed by ASTM International. The following tests are performed on the listed products:

- Gasoline – octane number, distillation, water and sediment
- Diesel Fuel – cetane number, distillation, flash point, water and sediment
- Motor Oil – viscosity
- Automatic Transmission Fluid – viscosity
- Engine Coolant (antifreeze) – boiling point and freezing point
- Brake Fluid – boiling point

What are the four basic requirements for gasoline and diesel fuel advertising signs?

All gasoline or other motor fuel price signs must include:

- The total price per gallon or liter including all taxes.
- The trademark or brand of the motor fuel.
- The word "gasoline" or the name of the other motor fuel.
- The grade designation of the motor fuel.

Is a disabled driver entitled to purchase gasoline at the self-serve price?

Yes. The disabled customer is entitled to get the gasoline at the self-serve price.

What does the Petroleum Products Program do when it finds products that do not meet the specifications?

After it is determined that the product does not meet specifications it is taken off sale and appropriate enforcement action is taken.

What are the penalties for selling products that do not meet specifications?

It is a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of up to \$1000, plus a penalty assessment and/or up to six months in the county jail.

How does a station advertise a discount for cash payment?

They post the price per gallon from which the reduction is to be taken, the amount of discount and the cash price. The condition of the discount cannot be less than one-third the size of the price numerals.

Can a station add a surcharge fee for the use of a credit card?

No. They cannot charge a surcharge according to the California Civil Code Section 1748.1(a).

Can a station charge a transaction fee for the use of a debit card?

Yes. However, the fee needs to be posted at the card reader.

Is a discount and a rebate or reward the same thing?

No. A discount indicates an immediate savings. A rebate or a reward are considered earned savings that are realized at a later time.

What is a card lock station?

A station not open to the general public where the seller and the buyer enter into a contract specifying the conditions of the sales of fuel.

Do card lock (CFN, Pacific Pride, etc.) and membership stores that do not accept major credit cards have to post price advertising signs?

No. They do not have to post advertising signs because they do not sell to people other than the ones entered into contract or members. If they were to accept major credit cards then they would not be considered card locks and would have to follow the advertising requirements as do the gasoline stations selling to the public.

As a station operator, is it acceptable to mix new product in my underground tanks with older product that does not meet specifications?

As a general rule, we do not recommend the mixing of new product with non-acceptable product because it is difficult to predict the outcome of the mixture.

Any product advertised must meet all requirements when dispensed.

What are the requirements for providing air and water to customers?

Gas stations are required to provide air and water free to customers who buy gasoline or diesel. You may have to ask the attendant for a token or to turn the equipment on for you. If the attendant does not give you a token or does not turn the equipment on, posted on or near the equipment is the 1-800-356-7057 number where you may call to file a complaint. You may also submit a [Complaint Form](#) online to the Division of Measurement Standards.

What is the Motor Oil Assessment Fee?

The Motor Oil Assessment Fee is imposed on the first production, sale, distribution or importation of motor oil in to California. For further information go to "Resource Information" on our website [Motor Oil Assessment Fee](#).